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# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Grand jury indicts alleged methamphetamine dealer**

MINNEAPOLIS— A man allegedly known for distributing large quantities of methamphetamine in Minnesota and North Dakota was indicted Oct. 16 by a federal grand jury on charges of conspiracy and distribution involving the highly addictive and dangerous drug.

Fermin Santacruz Rivera, 37, West St. Paul, was charged with one count of methamphetamine conspiracy; two counts of methamphetamine distribution; and two counts of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

Also charged in the indictment were Michelle Lee Lopez, 32, Worthington, and Jessica Joy Wilson, 37, Bigfork. Both were charged with one count of methamphetamine conspiracy and one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

According to court documents, Rivera was being investigated starting in early 2007, and police were able to make an “arranged controlled buy” of methamphetamine from Rivera on July 25, 2007, at an apartment complex parking lot in Richfield where he was arrested. During the execution of a search warrant of Rivera’s West St. Paul residence, police recovered approximately \$3,000 and approximately 8 ounces of methamphetamine.

Law enforcement conducted a search warrant on May 4, 2007, at Lopez’s Worthington residence, and recovered approximately 2 ounces of methamphetamine, a .25-caliber pistol, and several items of drug trafficking paraphernalia.

A search warrant executed on Wilson’s vehicle yielded 1 ounce of methamphetamine, \$1,000 and items of drug paraphernalia. During a search warrant of a Brainerd residence, authorities recovered 5 ounces of methamphetamine.

If convicted, all three face a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on the conspiracy charges. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Crow Wing County Sheriff’s Office, and the police departments of Brainerd,

West St. Paul and Worthington. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Dunne.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.